

**Stockingford
Nursery School**

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Passed and adopted by Governing Body:

Signed

Dated

Updated January 2021
(Review January 2022)

STOCKINGFORD NURSERY SCHOOL
SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR POLICY

We believe that children and adults flourish best in a calm and ordered environment, in which everyone knows what is expected of them and children are free to develop their play and learning without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else.

We have consistently high expectations of behaviour which include:

- We look after ourselves
- We look after each other
- We look after our toys, resources and belongings
- We keep our Nursery tidy

We aim to:

- Develop children's skills to enable them to co-regulate and self-regulate at times of emotional instability.
- Develop close liaisons between home and Nursery to discuss how to support children's emotional wellbeing.
- Use personalised targets with regard to behaviour expectations as required.
- Reinforce behaviour expectations in Nursery, whilst at the same time recognising when these may not be achievable for a child, due to emotional trauma or lived experience. In this case the parent-keyworker relationship is key to ensuring effective communication.
- Encourage intrinsically motivated and appropriate behaviours, using a range of strategies to develop children's self-esteem.
- Work towards a situation in which children and adults can develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

We base our behaviour responses to children on the key messages of the Solihull Approach - this approach emphasises the significance of relationships and communication patterns within the family in understanding children's behaviour and experiences. Strongly rooted in child development research, it offers us as professionals a holistic set of theoretical and practical tools for work with families drawing upon the concepts of containment, reciprocity and behaviour management.

Factors that may affect behaviour include:

- Loss/separation
- Life changes
- Traumatic events / Adverse Childhood Experiences (known as ACE's)
- Special Educational Needs
- Lived experience

In order to achieve our expectations, staff will provide a safe and consistent nurturing environment which means:

- All Staff use consistent language, messages and method, and this is shared with parents in a variety of ways, such as discussion, our parent leaflet on supporting behaviour, at new Parents meetings etc.
- All adults consistently model high behaviour expectations.
- Appropriate behaviour is encouraged with positive statements.
- Positive messages are reinforced with symbols, body language, gesture, spoken word and Makaton.
- The intervention spaces in both Big Nursery and Little Nursery provide further opportunities for children to develop skills to co-regulate and self- regulate.
- Intervention focused work takes place to support and develop emotional literacy at an appropriate developmental level. .

When children behave in an unacceptable way:

- Adults use a calm voice.
- Children are distracted or redirected where possible.
- Staff will be a regulator or co-regulator in developing children's self-regulation.
- The consequences of behaviour are described where possible.
- An apology (appropriate to age) and the reason why is encouraged and when needed, modelled by an adult.
- When unacceptable behaviour is repetitive, 'time in' may be used – e.g. the child will sit with an adult not at an activity of their choosing to reflect on their own behaviour and its impact (when developmentally appropriate).
- If necessary, a child's behaviour may be discussed with the parent/carer and strategies shared. The child's behaviour at home, and their containment and reciprocity will be part of these discussions.
- Where required, a positive intervention plan will be put in place and shared with parents, detailing how levels of behaviours will be recognised and supported.
- Children are offered a closed choice of 2 options.
- Adults wonder aloud for children 'I wonder if you are feeling sad because your friend Logan isn't here today.'
- Each session will be a fresh start where all previous issues are resolved.

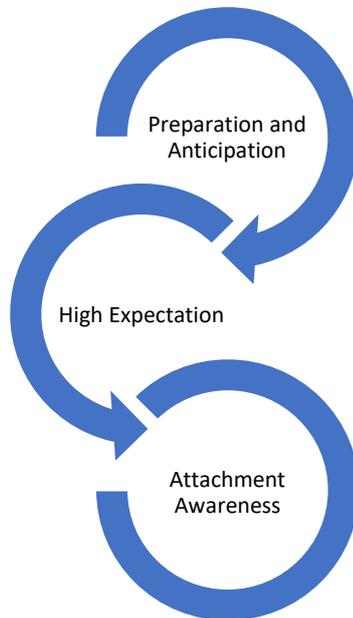
Adult/School Visitors (including outside agencies):

- All School visitors users will be expected to acknowledge the School's high expectations in relation to desirable and undesirable behaviours.
- High expectations are consistent, but are also fluid and flexible dependent on the child's lived/ current experiences.
- We will request that all School visitors respect each other and the Nursery children, families and staff.
- Adults are expected to use a calm, quiet voice and not use language in a threatening or abusive way. Failure to do so will result in immediate withdrawal from working with children. In cases of serious breach of professional expectation, immediate action will be taken by the Nursery School.
- Adults will be made aware of, and respect, the range of cultural expectation regarding interaction between people.

Staff will:

- Promote the School's high expectations with children, parents and other users.
- Personalise expectations for some children according to their individual needs.
- Have professional understanding of children's behaviour and its link to containment and reciprocity, development and the need to follow routines to give children a feeling of security and safety.
- Consistently model high behaviour expectations towards one another, the children and their families.
- Be confident working as part of a whole School team, establishing a consistent approach to high behaviour expectations and in offering support to each other.
- Work in partnership with other adults in encouraging high behaviour expectations and if necessary, to offer additional support/strategies.
- Record exceptional and persistent undesirable behaviours in behaviour logs and share with parents. Parents may be asked to sign the behaviour log after discussion with a keyworker has taken place.
- Encourage parents to feel comfortable in approaching staff about any problem that is worrying their child e.g. concerns expressed at home or any changes in circumstances which may be affecting the child's behaviour patterns at school.
- Develop good communication links with parents and other professional partners that help prepare staff to support children's emotional wellbeing on a daily basis if required. This will be an essential component of success.
- Staff share expectations for children regularly. Staff will be prepared to pre-empt situations which may cause children extra stress and anxiety which lead to inappropriate behaviours and provide a solution focused approach.

- Follow the ethos of Hygge which underpins our practice and approach, provide children with a nurturing, homely and welcoming environment in which children feel included and valued. This includes delivering sessions of Tai Chi and yoga in Big Nursery
- The Headteacher and Teachers will support key workers and staff to recognise that some children may have suffered crisis or emotional trauma and will therefore need to engage appropriately with children and families. Staff will be supported and prepared to receive children in session.



Protective Behaviours

Protective Behaviours is a safety and life skills programme which builds confidence and resilience by exploring everyone's right to feel safe. It is based on two key factors:

- ***We all have the right to feel safe all of the time.***
- ***We can talk with someone about anything even if it feels overwhelming or small.***

At Stockingford Nursery School we follow these two themes along with the language of safety to ensure all children feel safe in nursery. We value how children feel and ensure that children have a right to talk about their feelings. We also support children to begin to recognise their early warning signs, as an indication that they are beginning to not feel safe. We provide skills, strategies and tools to enable individuals to reflect on their emotional wellbeing, so that they can begin to feel safe and secure again.

Positive handling and restraint

All staff have a contractual duty of care to maintain discipline and to keep children safe. This duty of care may require them to physically intervene in certain circumstances

- The aim will always be **not** to use a 'hands on' approach unless absolutely necessary.
- Staff are trained in the Team-Teach method of positive behaviour management.
- Any physical intervention will be appropriate and for the safety and wellbeing of all.

For further guidance please see our Positive Handling and Restraint Policy.

Strategies with children who engage in inconsiderate behaviour

- We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development. Such solutions might include, for example, expectation, this is what we do – the child has one instruction at a time so they can assimilate. Acknowledgement of feelings, explanation as to what was not acceptable, and supporting children to gain control of their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response.
- We encourage children to communicate with one another, explaining that they do not like what is happening and to express their feelings, developing an emotional literacy and empowering them to keep themselves safe. This may be through gesture, sign and/or use of the word 'stop!'
- We acknowledge and praise considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
- We always comment upon the child's behaviour rather than the child, such as 'I can see you feel cross at the moment, what can I do to help you?'
- We support each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
- We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in the group, so that they feel valued and welcome.
- We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour.
- When children behave in inconsiderate ways, we help them to understand the outcomes of their action and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately.
- In cases of racial or other abuse, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame. All incidents of racial or other abuse will be logged and passed onto the Local Authority if this is required.
- We may use a spot / carpet tile for children to sit on to encourage good listening behaviours.

- We take into account the stages of development of our children, and use key words, symbols, gesture and emotion pictures to support.
- We use Makaton to support communication of feelings.

Rough and tumble play, hurtful behaviour and bullying.

Rough and tumble play and fantasy aggression

Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes – such as superhero and weapon play; some children appear pre-occupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour or bullying, although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need addressing using strategies as above.

- We recognise that rough and tumble play can be normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not as problematic or aggressive.
- We will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure children are not hurt.
- We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violently dramatic strategies, blowing up, shooting etc., and that themes often refer to ‘goodies and baddies’ and as such offer opportunities for us to explore concepts of right and wrong.
- We are able to tune in to the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, making the most of ‘teachable moments’ to encourage empathy and lateral thinking to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution. Staff may direct play if they feel this is appropriate.

Hurtful behaviour

Most children at an early stage of learning appropriate social and group behaviours will at some stage hurt or say something hurtful to another child. This hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without awareness of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.

- We recognise that young children may behave in hurtful ways towards others because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings that sometimes overwhelm them.
- We will help them manage these feelings as they not have the biological means nor the cognitive means to do this for themselves.
- We understand that self-management of intense emotions, especially of anger, happens when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the physiological processes that take place when triggers activate responses of anger or fear. For some children, the emotional brain takes over from the thinking brain, causing them to react in a certain way – ‘fight or flight.’
- Therefore we help this process by offering support, calming the child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt by the behaviour.
- We do not engage in ‘punishing’ responses to a young child’s rage as that will have the opposite effect.

- Our way of responding to pre-verbal children is to calm them through offering verbal or physical containment, if this is what the child indicates they need, or if the child requests this. Verbal children may also respond to physical containment to calm them down, but we offer them an explanation and discuss the incident with them matched to their level of understanding.
- We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings they experience. We help children recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and the feeling. “Anna took your car, and you were enjoying playing with it. You didn’t like it when she took it? Did it make you feel angry? Is that why you hit her?” Older children will be able to verbalise their feelings better, talking through themselves the feelings that motivated the behaviour. Nursery School staff use key words, depending on stage of development of child.
- We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others’ feelings. “When you hit Anna, it hurt her and she didn’t like that, it made her cry.”
- We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. “I can see you are feeling better now and Anna isn’t crying any more. Let’s see if we can be friends and find another car, so you can both play with one.”
- We are aware that the same problem may happen over and over before skills such as sharing and turn-taking develop. In order for both the biological maturation and cognitive development to take place, children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient adults and clear boundaries.
- We support social skills through modelling behaviour, through activities, drama and stories. We build self-esteem and confidence in children, recognising their emotional needs through close and committed relationships with them.
- We help a child to understand the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another child; we do not force children to say sorry, but encourage this where it is clear that they are genuinely sorry and wish to show this to the person they have hurt. Sometimes a child may be encouraged to ask if the hurt child is ok, and support them to make them better – get a wet paper towel, take them to the first aid chairs etc. Adults will also model this strategy.
- When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together. The main reasons for very young children to engage in excessive hurtful behaviour are:
 - They do not feel securely attached to someone who can interpret and meet their needs – this may be in the home and it may also be in the setting.
 - The child may have insufficient language or mastery of English, to express him or herself and may feel frustrated.
 - The child is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk.
 - The child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.

A PIP (Positive Intervention Plan) may then be put in place, recognising the behaviours exhibited when an individual child’s behaviour escalates or de-escalates, and how best the role of the adult can support this.

Bullying

We believe a child who is bullying has reached a stage of cognitive development where he or she is able to plan to carry out a premeditated intent to cause distress in another.

Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. It is characterised by intent to hurt, often planned, and accompanied by an awareness of the impact of the bullying behaviour.

As a School we are aware that our children are developmentally at an early stage of learning appropriate social and group behaviours and may engage in unacceptable behaviour from time to time that is unintentional and without deliberate intent. Staff recognise that some incidents of angry/aggressive, persistent or unacceptable behaviour may occur and these will need to be addressed quickly and supportively.

If a child bullies another child, staff are aware that we would:

- Show the children who have been bullied that we are able to listen to their concerns and act upon them.
- Intervene to stop the child who is bullying from harming the other child or children.
- Explain to the child doing the bullying why her/his behaviour is not acceptable.
- Give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied.
- Help the child who has done the bullying to recognise the impact of their actions.
- Make sure that children who bully receive positive feedback for considerate behaviour and are given opportunities to practise and reflect on considerate behaviour.
- Not label children who bully as 'bullies'.
- Recognise that children who bully may be experiencing bullying themselves, or be subject to abuse or other circumstance causing them to express their anger in negative ways towards others.
- Recognise that children who bully are often unable to empathise with others and for this reason we do not insist that they say sorry unless it is clear that they feel genuine remorse for what they have done. Empty apologies can be just as hurtful to the bullied child as the original behaviour.
- Discuss what has happened with the parents of the child who did the bullying and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour.
- Share what has happened with the parents of the child who has been bullied, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.

**Bullying will not be tolerated in any form, from adults or children.
It will be dealt with using the strategies above.**

COVID-19 – Reset and Recovery

Within the process of recovery, we will have a clear focus on **relationships**. We recognise that children will have lost or forgotten some skills and our recovery curriculum begins with teaching from children's starting points, which also is at the heart of our vision, values and early year pedagogy.

'Schools should make decisions based on the needs of the individual child...Some children have lost a lot of time.'

(Amanda Spielman, Chief Inspector for Ofsted)

Our recovery curriculum will support and extend learning by looking through the eyes of the child – their interests, fears and relationships. Our pedagogy of the role of the adult supporting the child in child-led learning is embedded in our planning in the moment process, enabling practitioners to build creative stimulating links in learning. Offering provocation to children supports and extends the engagement process through exploration, realisation, anticipation, persistence and initiation **(Engagement Profile 2020 Rochford Version)** and the characteristics of effective learning: play and exploration, active learning and thinking critically. **(EYFS 2017)**

We recognise that our children may be exhibiting behaviours that highlight their inability to yet understand the changes to the world around them: These may be mood swings, tantrums, sleep deprivation or bed wetting.

Barnardo's: The number of children needing foster care has risen by 44% during the coronavirus pandemic while the number of people looking to become foster parents plummeted by nearly half compared to the same period last year.

Our recovery curriculum will therefore:

- ***Be a construct*** – built, made and created to support the needs of our learners through continuous provision, provocation and adult led-learning experiences.
- ***Be built on compassionate leadership*** – understanding and responding to the needs of our learners through effective positive relationships
- ***Be aims and values led*** – reflecting our vision, values and pedagogy
- ***Use best informed judgements*** – based on the interventions of observations of our learners responses
- ***Use a personalised response*** – to respond effectively to individual need

We recognise that children may have experienced loss:

Loss of routine, Loss of structure, Loss of friendship, Loss of opportunity, Loss of freedom

And that this in turn can generate consequences:

Bereavement, Attachment, Anxiety, Trauma

'Anxiety is a key block to learning. It can prevent the imprint on the brain.' McCulloch,A. (2008)

We recognise that the anxious child is not a learning child, and that the environment we created before the Pandemic is not the same environment we have created now.

Building relationships:

Through imitation:

- Responding to interactions is vital, as relationships are complex multi-layer constructs
- Imitation is a key way to nurture and develop relationships. It will stimulate new neural pathways in the brain. Modelling activities and learning is essential to the role of the adult in learning.

- Consistently reach out to greet children. Tell them it's good to see them. Keep telling them.
- Re-engage with the School community. Engage, listen, understand and grow together.
- Metacognition – explicitly scaffold teaching to grow children's confidence as a learner
- Co-construct the curriculum/learning experiences with children so that they can see how you addressing the gaps
- Make sure children have space – space to be, to rediscover self-image, self-concept, self-esteem, confidence and self-efficacy
- Co-regulate and self-regulate

'Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in his or her capacity to execute behaviours necessary to produce specific performance attainment' (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997)

The phases of our recovery curriculum will reflect:

- *Holistic recovery for all – through focus and emphasis on the prime areas of learning, particularly relationships*
- *Focussed recovery – a personalised needs-led approach by supporting learning at an individual level*
- *Deep recovery – enabling a longer period of exploration of trauma when this is required*

And our School response will reflect the values we hold that enable us to achieve our vision of **Nurture. Inspire. Grow.**

- *Celebrating, respecting and valuing everyone as unique individuals*
- *Exploring, investigating and discovering through play*
- *Creating a safe, stimulating learning environment that promotes curiosity and awe & wonder*
- *Working together to encourage children and families to achieve their full potential*
- *Developing independence and resilience through positive relationships*
- *Laughing, loving, and living in the moment, to create lasting memories and dispositions for lifelong learning*

Reading & References

- Rules vs expectations, Headteacher Update, November 2018: <http://www.headteacher-update.com/best-practice-article/behaviour-inclusion-rules-vs-expectations/193966/>
- Pastoral support: Emotion coaching, Headteacher Update, March 2017: <http://bit.ly/2og390C>
- Pastoral support: Anticipation and preparation, Headteacher Update, March 2018: <http://bit.ly/2EwV7Mz>
- The Attachment Research Community is a community of schools/settings committed to supporting attachment needs: <https://the-arc.org.uk/>
- Emotion Coaching UK is a company offering training, resources and support for schools: www.emotioncoachinguk.com